

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Computerized scheduling has been added for maximum efficiency in Special Services.
- ✓ Electronic fareboxes will be implemented late in 2003 to improve collection of ridership data, improve accuracy of fare collections and provide increased customer convenience in fare options.
- ✓ Funding is provided for para-transit van replacement.
- ✓ Route changes are planned and will help control operating and overtime costs, optimize operating revenues, and increase the department's eligibility for grant funding.

The core mission of Wichita Transit is to provide a reliable and economical public transportation system to the community.

Overview

Wichita Transit operates 51 buses on 16 fixed routes and 15 para-transit vans that provide service to physically challenged individuals on a curb-to-curb basis. Service is provided from six a.m. to seven p.m. Monday through Friday, and seven a.m. to six p.m. on Saturday.

To complement that service, six para-transit vans are leased to local social service agencies for dedicated client transport. Employment-related transportation is coordinated for qualifying clients referred by social service agencies with service from six a.m. to two a.m., 20 hours per day, seven days a week.

Transit also operates a fleet of five trolleys that provide transportation for the Wichita Historical Tours and are available for private charter.

The downtown Transit Center functions as the base for transfers and most direct customer services. Administration and maintenance services are provided from the Transportation Operations Center, completed in 1999.

Finance and Operations

Operating resources are from fares, trolley charter revenue, advertising, General Fund subsidies and state and federal grants. Total resources reflect fluctuations in state and federal revenues as a result of intermittent capital investments for vans, buses, and technology.

Plans continue for sustainable service enhancements utilizing technology for more cost efficient services. Grant funding is currently being directed to capital improvements such as electronic fareboxes, new para-transit vans, scheduling software applications, automatic vehicle locator applications, bus shelters and bus stops for easier wheel chair access, all of which will guide the Department toward future growth and efficiencies.

The fund balance has grown over the last several years. However, it will decline with capital purchases. The planned investments will be funded 80 percent by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), state funds have been reserved from the annual allocation for a portion of the local match, and the balance of the 20 percent match will be drawn from the accumulated fund balance. The fund balance will decline until the capital investments are complete in 2003, at which time the fund balance is projected to stabilize.

Prior to 2003, the City received over \$9 million in federal capital grants. These grants allowed the entire Transit fleet to be modernized. Federal capital grants in the future will be direct to Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL) systems. In addition, it is anticipated the new electronic farebox equipment will boost revenues.

Operating revenues in the Transit Fund are projected to remain relatively stable, growing from modest increases in ridership. Expenditures continue to rise more rapidly than revenues, increasing the need for more cost effective and cost efficient services. Efforts are being intensified to maximize use of grant funding, setting aside some state funds as part of the 20 percent federal grant match requirement for capital purchases. Cost savings are anticipated with a new bus fleet and technological aids to better plan and manage the operations.



A complete fleet of new buses will provide fixed – route service to the community.

Special Service rides for mobility-impaired citizens have grown in excess of 10 percent annually over the last six years, but leveled off in 2002. Transit provided more than 187,033 para-transit rides, 82,283 of which were special curb-to-curb rides provided directly by Transit employees. Complementing the para-transit service is the Access To Jobs service, which provides employment related transportation for qualifying low-income citizens. Many citizens qualify for both para-transit and employment related service. Combined, Transit Special Services supplied 287,439 rides in 2002.

Employment related transportation for qualifying citizens is provided in partnership with local social service agencies. Beginning in late 2000, transportation for qualifying clients was coordinated nearly around the clock for seven days per week. Ridership demand in this area has continued to grow. Assisted with FTA grant funding, the jobs access program provided 100,406 rides in 2002, an increase of nearly 9 percent over 2001 levels.

The majority of para-transit rides are purchased from independent operators and social service agencies. Purchased rides are less costly to the City because costs are shared across agencies and the overall capacity of all providers is utilized more efficiently. Six agencies provide service with vans leased from the City for the added benefit of priority service to their own clients. Special para-transit ridership is projected to continue to grow at double-digit rates.

Transit staff consists of 24 van drivers, four clerks, and two program coordinators. One van driver was added in 2002 to assist with growing demand during peak periods. One additional clerk was also added in 2002 to assist with processing and renewal of FTA required documentation that qualifies riders for para-transit service. Currently the department operates a total of 14 van routes that provide curb-to-curb service compared to 16 fixed bus routes.



New Para-transit software will improve the service delivery of Special Services employees.

Fixed Route Service provided 1.9 million rides in 2002, down 11 percent from the 2.1 million rides given in 2001. Economic factors contributed most significantly to the decline in ridership. Under the current service mix, ridership is projected to resume slow growth.

Driver and increasing fuel expenses are the primary costs associated with operations. Bus operations are financed totally from local funds and represent over half of total operating costs.

Key to improving performance is an aggressive safety program and diligent monitoring of light duty assignments to reduce workers' compensation costs which have risen sharply. Also key to improved cost efficiencies is maintaining full employment and controlling overtime utilization. The additional compensated holidays as components of labor agreements, the impact of the Family Medical Leave Act, and increased service have increased the overtime usage. The 2004 budget includes some route changes to achieve optimum use of available grant funding, and removes two of the four additional bus operators originally added, to control overtime bus operations.

Maintenance includes all costs associated with maintaining the fleet of buses, vans and trolleys, the bus shelters, in addition to the Transit Center; and the Transit Operations Center.



A full complement of new para-transit vans has arrived, bringing increased comfort to Wichita's disabled citizens.

Currently two porters fuel and clean the vehicles while the cleaning and maintenance of shelters is provided through contracted services. Priority has been given to operational enhancements, such as fareboxes and scheduling software. An additional porter was added in 2002 to improve the experience of citizens and visitors taking advantage of public transportation services. Vehicle maintenance costs are projected to continue to decline with the pending purchase of new para-transit vans to complement the fleet of 39 new buses.

The Trolley operation began in 1993 and consists of a fleet of five 20-seat trolleys. The trolley provides transportation for many community events, hosts the Historic Wichita Tour, and is available for charter. Trolley operations are self-supporting, however capital investments are subsidized. Demand for Historical Tours fell by 30 percent in 2002, after being popular during the past three seasons. Advertising revenue, relied upon as a significant funding source, has declined dramatically over that time frame. Advertising revenue from 1999-2001 generated \$56,950 in revenue. Advertising revenue declined in 2002 to \$15,000. Without a firm advertising commitment, the fund will have trouble maintaining an adequate balance to support current program offerings.

Charters continue to be largest source of revenue with charter rates adjusted upward for 2003. The rate increase will generate an additional \$3,000 per year. To counter increases in operating costs, several additional steps were taken early in 2003. Two older trolleys were sold by auction in an effort to raise needed cash, leaving the current fleet of five trolleys. Maintenance and operating expenses should continue to decline with the disposal of the older vehicles. Account receivables were reduced and a new policy was put in place for advance payment for charters. Finally, the Saturday service to the Farm & Art Market building was terminated, which became a critical drain on the fund balance.

The Trolley Fund has sufficient cash to operate in 2004. In the absence of another major funding source, the fund will not operate on a breakeven basis, and will continue to decline in 2004.

Transit Budget Summary					
	2002 Actual	2003 Adopted	2003 Revised	2004 Adopted	2005 Approved
Personal Services	2,871,141	3,442,090	3,226,450	3,407,730	3,566,830
Contractuals	739,366	769,440	782,940	841,310	841,580
Commodities	548,594	490,560	494,720	497,670	497,670
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0
Other	698,915	615,160	688,910	636,960	634,440
Total Local Expenditures	4,858,016	5,317,250	5,193,020	5,383,670	5,540,520
Trolley Fund Expenditures	109,587	140,410	140,180	141,360	142,240
Transit Fund Expenditures	4,748,429	5,176,840	5,052,840	5,242,310	5,398,280
Total Local Expenditures	4,858,016	5,317,250	5,193,020	5,383,670	5,540,520
State Operating Grants	889,173	579,330	285,050	293,600	302,410
Federal Operating Grants	2,611,199	2,694,510	3,407,858	3,487,090	3,589,310
Total Full-time positions	124	129	126	126	126
Total part-time positions	2	2	2	2	2
Total FTE positions	123	128	125	125	125



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF FLIGHT



"Lightning and Thunderbird"

Artist: Greg Johnson
Where: Rusty Eck Ford
7310 E. Kellogg (Kellogg & Armour)
Sponsor: Hillcrest Bank
Benefits: Inter-Faith Ministries Map

"Taxi"

Artist: Leo Kust
Where: Mid-Continent Airport
1600 Airport Road
Sponsor: Department of Airport -
City of Wichita
Benefits: Art Council Youth Programming



"Mustang Pilot's License"

Artist: Dan Welty
Where: Mel Hambelton Ford
11771 W. Kellogg
(119th St. & Kellogg)
Sponsor: Mel Hambelton Ford
Benefits: Make A Wish Foundation